

(c) This could be exactly known only after a census of plantains is taken.

(d) and (e) No.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: May I know, whether the import of plantain seedlings from other districts to the affected area is prohibited?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: Yes, Sir.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: May I know how, when all these diseased plantains are cut, they could grow by seedlings if the import is prohibited now?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: Those areas have to be allowed to lie fallow for a period of about a year after complete destruction so that the soil will have been freed of the virus. Thereafter fresh planting can be done.

Scientific cultivation of cocoanuts.

154. *** Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai:** Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps are taken by the Department of Agriculture for the scientific cultivation of cocoanuts;

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative the nature of the steps taken;

(c) what steps are taken by the Agricultural Department to increase the quantity of production and to improve the quality of cocoanuts;

(d) what is the total yield of cocoanuts in the State for each of the last five years;

(e) what is the average yield of cocoanuts per acre in our State at present;

(f) have they taken notice of the fact that there is a gradual decrease in the average yield of cocoanuts year after year; and

(g) if so, what are the causes of such a steady decrease?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar: (a) Yes.

(b) & (c) Use of selected nuts, application of manures, control of insect pests and the conduct of cultural and manurial demonstrations.

(d) The estimated average yield is about 1,125 million nuts per year.

(e) The average yield per acre is between 1500 and 2000 nuts.

(f) No. There is no decrease in yield.

(g) In view of the answer to part (f), this question does not arise.

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai : May I know whether it will be possible to publish periodicals and pamphlets from time to time by the Agricultural Department giving information that could be supplied to local cultivators ?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar : The department has published a number of leaflets on the subject, and there is a book of leaflets which I will make available to the honourable members.

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai : May I know whether it is a fact that large number of cocoanut trees are affected by the root disease ?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar : Yes, Sir.

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai : May I know whether the average yield of cocoanuts remains the same for the last several years ?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar : No, Sir.

Indian Central Cocoanut Committee.

155. * **Mr. K. A Raman Pillai :** Will the Government be pleased to state :

(a) the functions of the Indian Central Cocoanut Committee ;

(b) the resolutions passed by the Committee at its last meeting held in Trivandrum ; and

(c) what steps, if any, have been taken by them to protect the cocoanut industry from outside competition ?

Mr. K. R. Narayana Aiyar : (a) To promote the improvement and development of the cultivation and marketing of cocoanuts and their utilisation for the production of copra, cocoanut oil and cocoanut pinnac and for such other purposes as the Committee may think fit—

(i) by undertaking, assisting or encouraging agricultural, industrial, technological and economic research ;

(ii) by the supply of technical advice to growers ;

(iii) by encouraging the adoption of improved methods of cultivation ;

(iv) by carrying on such propaganda in the interests of the cocoanut industry as may be necessary ;

(v) by the collecting statistics from growers, dealers, millers and other sources on all relevant matters bearing on the industry ;

(vi) by fixing grade standards of copra and its products ;